

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SCS-03 DPW-01 DHA-02
SCA-01 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /087 W
-----251314Z 098570 /53

R 250930Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 483
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
DIA WASHDC
JCRC BARBERS PT HAWAII
CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D T N T I A L BANGKOK 6538

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CASC, VS
SUBJECT: AMERICANS IN VIET-NAM

REF: BANGKOK 5374

1. FORMER GVN CIVIL SERVANT WHO ARRIVED IN THAILAND FROM
HAM TAN IN FORMER BINH TUY PROVINCE MAR 19 HAS RECOUNTED
FOLLOWING STORY OF AMERICANS REPORTEDLY INCARCERATED IN
SAIGON'S CHI HOA PRISON. HE AND HIS WIFE WERE HIDING IN
FRIEND'S HOUSE IN SAIGON IN FIRST HALF OF NOVEMBER, 1976.
DURING THAT TIME THE FRIEND'S WIFE VISITED WIFE OF FORMER
PRIMIN PHAN HUY UAT AT HER HOME. BOTH QUAT AND HIS WIFE
WERE HELD IN CHI HOA UNTIL THE WIFE WAS RELEASED DURING
EARLY NOVEMBER. SHE CONTINUED TO VISIT HER HUSBAND IN THE
JAIL.

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2. QUAT'S WIFE REPORTEDLY SIAD THAT, DURING HER TIME AT
CHI HOA, THERE WERE TWO AMERICANS BEING HELD THERE. JUST
PRIOR TO HER RELEASE IN NOV, 1976, ONE DIED, A TALL MAN
WHOM THE VIETNAMESE HAD PROBLEMS FITTING INTO A CASKET.
THE OTHER, DESCRIBED ONLY AS AN AMERICAN WHO RETURNED TO
VIET-NAM PRIOR TO THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER CARRYING \$5,000

AND IN SEARCH OF HIS FATHER WHO DISAPPEARED IN VIET-NAM DURING THE WAR YEARS, REMAINED IN PRISON. OUR SOURCE HAD NO FURTHER DETAILS OF ANY KIND.

3. COMMENT: IT IS POSSIBLE, OF COURSE, THAT FIRST PRISONER MENTIONED WAS GOUGELMANN, TIME FRAME IN WHICH HIS DEATH OCCURRED BECOMING SOMEWHAT BLURRED IN RECOUNTING OF THE STORY AT SOME POINT. WE HAVE NO IDEA WHO THE SECOND PERSON MAY BE, ASSUMING HE IS ACTUALLY AN AMERICAN. EMBASSY HAS PASSED THIS STORY, AS WELL AS THE AP REPORT ON GOUGELMANN'S DEATH, TO ICRC HANOI REPRESENTATIVE BAUMGARTNER, WHO IS CURRENTLY IN BANGKOK AND MAY BE VISITING SAIGON SOON.

4. WITH RESPECT TO GOUGELMANN, HIS SISTER CALLED HIS BANGKOK BUSINESSMAN FRIEND MAR 21 TO INFORM HIM THAT DEPARTMENT HAD CONVEYED TO FAMILY INFORMATION PICKED UP IN HANOI ABOUT GOUGELMANN'S DEATH LAST JUNE. WE UNDERSTAND FAMILY IS THINKING OF REQUESTING DEPARTMENT TO ASK VIETNAMESE FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONCERNING CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS DEATH. THEY ARE UNCLEAR AS TO WHY GOUGELMANN'S VIETNAMESE FAMILY HAS BEEN INDICATING HE WAS ALIVE AND WELL (REFTEL). FINALLY, BUSINESSMAN REPORTED THAT GOUGELMAN HAD COMPLETED ALL NECESSARY U.S. ADOPTION PROCEDURES FOR HIS TWO CHILDREN BUT HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO COMPLETE GVN PROCEDURES WHEN SAIGON FELL. WHITEHOUSE

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